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MEMBERS COUNTY COMMISSION

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PRESIDING COMMISSIONER

DENNIS ZIEGENHORN
FIRST DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

JAMIE BURGER
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SCOTT COUNTY COMMISSION

P.O. Box 188 • Benton, Missouri 63736

Tuesday, June 21, 2005


Kenneth H. Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
Section of Environmental Analysis
1925 K St., N.W. Suite 500
Washington, MO 20423

Dear Mr. Blodgett:


On March 14, 2005, Union Pacific Railroad filed an application with the Surface Transportation Board requesting a track exchange with Burlington Northern Railroad. The exchange will reroute train traffic currently passing through Stoddard County onto railways in Scott County increasing traffic from the current level of 10 per day to 22 or more trains per day. As members of the Scott County commission, our concerns are for the health and safety of the county's residents.

The proposed track switch will more than double train traffic at six state highway crossing, eleven county road crossings, and will cross numerous city streets. This increased volume and speed poses an unnecessary risk to the motorists and pedestrian of our county who are unaccustomed to high volume train traffic. Additionally, the increased traffic poses a risk to our residents by increasing response time of emergency services in the county. In validation of this concern, we offer the following example. On Sunday, June 5, 2005, a public safety officer from the Sikeston Department of Public Safety was dispatched to the west side of the city to investigate an altercation. He was overwhelmed by a mob of 80 people and was pelted with rocks and bottles. After requesting backup, he was informed that support would be delayed due to train traffic which had isolated the west end of the city. Train traffic is at an increased level on that route as part of a temporary agreement. When backup arrived, 60 officers were needed to restore order. We feel the increased traffic has and will endanger our citizens by lengthening response time for emergency workers. Vital routes will be more frequently severed, isolating nursing homes and schools from ambulance, law enforcement, and fire services.

Our opinion remains that the Union Pacific track exchange will unnecessarily endanger the citizens of Scott County by moving traffic from routes designed and accustomed to high volume train traffic to routes unprepared and unacquainted with the dangers of high volume and higher speed train traffic.


DENNIS ZIEGENHORN
1st District Commissioner


MARTIN PRIGGEL
Presiding Commissioner


JAMIE BURGER
2nd District Commissioner

Standard - Democrat

06/15/05

Nine Residents Given Jail Time After Disturbance Last Week.

SIKESTON — Nine local residents were sentenced to jail after a large disturbance on the 1000 block of Ruth Street last week.

Judge Franklin Marshall sentenced the men and women who were either involved in the incident or were arrested as a result of the disturbance on June 5.

The disturbance began at approximately 9:30 p.m. when an altercation began, leading to an officer with the Sikeston Department of Public Safety being dispatched. Upon the officer's arrival, he was pelted by bottles and bricks from a large gathering of about 80 people.

The officer immediately called for back-up, however additional officers were held up by a southbound train. With backup stalled, the officer was advised to vacate the area. When the supervisor and additional officers arrived a short time later they were also pelted by bottles and bricks. At that point, an all- call was issued for DPS personnel. Approximately 60 officers responded to the disturbance and arrests were made.

"Nine Residents Given Jail Time After Disturbance Last Week."

Standard-Democrat 15 June 2005, sec. A: 1.